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SRI M. DHARMALINGAM :—" On a point of order, Sir. The Hon. Minister has acted on the information furnished by the department concerned having faith in it. I can say that it is an incorrect statement . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Is this a point of order? "

SRI M. DHARMALINGAM :—" I say it is an incorrect statement, because almost all the persons who have taken and executed works under the National Extension Service have not been paid their dues within a reasonable time, but only have been paid after long delays. I have also brought this to the notice of the Government that this was going on. The Hon. Minister has not enquired into the matter to a greater extent to find out whether the allegations are correct or incorrect; but he has come forward to say that he is the father of the M.L.A., etc."

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" I must state at once, Sir, that I did cause an enquiry to be made on receipt of the question by the hon. Member and the only information is what I have presented to the House, namely, that there was only a particular case where one party had not been paid relating to a well work at Alagiripet cheri; the party is one Sri Murugesan, the father of Sri Dharmalingam, M.L.A. and the delay was with the Assistant Engineer in preparation of the bill. It was stated that the bill was not prepared for want of agreement being signed by the party. Later on, the agreement was executed by the party on 27th December 1954 and a copy of the agreement was sent to the Assistant Engineer (Special), Saidapet, the bill was duly passed and sent to the Block Development Officer for effecting payment; the Block Development Officer has also stated that he would make the payment as soon as the necessary revised sanction is obtained."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Questions over. Sri K. V. Ramaswami will now move the motion under rule 40."

[*Note.*—**An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.**]

III.—MOTION UNDER RULE 40 OF THE ASSEMBLY RULES *RE* FIRE ACCIDENT AT VARAGUR VILLAGE OF SALEM DISTRICT.

SRI K. V. RAMASWAMI :—" கனம் சபாநாயகர் அவர்களே, சென்ற மாதம் 26ந்தேதியன்று நாமக்கல் தாலூக்காவில் இருக்கக்கூடிய வரகூர் என்ற கிராமத்தில் திடீரென்று ஒரு பெரிய தீ விபத்து ஏற்பட்டது. அந்த தீ விபத்தின் காரணமாக அங்கு மிகப் பெரிய சேதம் ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறது. அந்த விபத்து ஏற்பட்டவுடனேயே அந்த ஊரிலுள்ள வாலிபர்கள் பெரு முயற்சி எடுத்து தீயை அணைக்கவும் ஏற்பாடு செய்தார்கள். அதோடு போஸ்டாபீஸ் மூலமாக டிரங்க் டெலிபோனில் பேசி சேலத்தில் இருக்கக் கூடிய தீ அணைக்கும் படையினரின் உதவியையும் கோரினார்கள். ஆனால் 40, 50 மைலுக்கு அப்பாலுள்ள அந்தத் தீ அணைக்கும் படையினர் வருவதற்கும், இந்த வரகூர் கிராமத்தில் பிடித்துக்கொண்ட தீ அடங்குவதற்கும் சரியாகப் போய்விட்டது. நாமக்கல் தாலூக்காவிற்குப் பக்கத்திலேயே **Fire Service** இல்லாததினால் தான் அன்றைக்கு தீ அணைக்கும் படையினரின் உதவி கிடைக்காமலேயே போய்விட்டது. அதனால் 35 குடும் 9-20 a.m.

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பங்கள் மிகப் பெரிய சேதத்திற்கு உள்ளாகியிருக்கின்றன. அறுபது கூரைகள் தீயினால் வெந்து போயிருக்கின்றன. அறுபதினாயிரம் ரூபாய்க்கு மேல் சேதம் ஏற்பட்டிருக்கவேண்டும் என்பதாக நான் சமீபத்தில் அந்த ஊருக்குப் போயிருந்த காலத்தில் மதிப்பிடப்பட்டது. அந்தத் தீ விபத்தினால் பாதிக்கப்பட்ட 35 குடும்பங்களும் சிறு நில விவசாயிகளுடைய குடும்பங்கள். அவர்கள் எல்லாம் மிக ஏழைகள். அவர்கள் தங்கள் சாப்பாட்டிற்காகவும் தங்களிடமுள்ள கால்நடைகளின் தீவனத்திற்காகவும் வைத்திருந்த பொருள்கள் எல்லாம் வெந்து சாம்பலாகிவிட்டன. அந்த 35 குடும்பங்களில் ஒரு தச்சு வேலை செய்பவருடைய குடும்பமும் சேர்ந்திருக்கிறது. வழக்கமாக எங்கள் பக்கத்தில் ஏதாவது விபத்து ஏற்பட்டால் அதற்கு நிவாரணமாக சர்க்கார் பனை ஓலைகளை இனாமாக வெட்டிக்கொண்டு போகச் சொல்வார்கள். அம்மாதிரியான நிவாரணம் தற்போது கொடுப்பதில் பயனில்லை. இந்தத் தீ விபத்தினால் ஏராளமான பொருள் சேதத்திற்கு உள்ளாகியிருக்கும் குடும்பங்களுக்கு நிறைய உதவி எல்லாவகையிலும் அளிப்பது மிக மிக அவசியம். அதற்குவேண்டிய ஏற்பாட்டை கனம் ரெவின்யூ மந்திரி அவர்கள் செய்யவேண்டுமென்று கேட்டுக்கொண்டு நான் முடித்துக்கொள்ளுகிறேன்."

* THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" Sir, on 25th February 1955 at about 11-30 a.m. a fire broke out in Varagur village of Namakkal taluk, Salem district, 46 miles from Salem Fire Station. A girl of 7 years by name Rajalakshmi kindled fire in the oven to prepare hot water and the splinters that started from the fire ignited the ends of grass overhanging the 'Parani' over the oven. The roof of the hut caught fire which gradually spread to the adjoining huts. Most of the villagers were engaged in field work.

" Information of the fire was received at the Fire Station at 12-30 noon. The Fire Service Units responded immediately and reached the scene at 2-50 p.m. Immediately on arrival at the fire spot the units were set to work and the fire was brought under control in two hours. The fire was completely put out after making use of the water from a well.

" Fifty-nine thatched dwelling huts belonging to 36 individuals were destroyed by the fire with the foodgrains such as paddy, kambu, cholam and varagu. The houses burnt lie in two rows from east to west. The tiled and terraced houses interspread were not affected. Before the fire squad could reach the place, all the sixty houses were in flames. The estimated value of foodgrains involved in the fire was Rs. 5,300 and foodgrains worth about Rs. 455 were saved from destruction. The total estimated value of property involved in the fire was Rs. 20,000 while the estimated loss was Rs. 8,875. There has been no loss of human or animal life.

" It is also reported that the Panchayat Board President, Village Munsif and the villagers and the local Sub-Inspector of Police with Police constables rendered good assistance to the Fire Service and they were engaged in extinguishing the fire at the time of arrival of Fire Units and that the fire was threatening to spread on all directions fanned by a heavy wind at the time of the arrival of Fire Units at the fire spot.

" The Collector of Salem has stated that he has sanctioned a cash grant of Rs. 30 to each of the 33 victims (out of 36) who were

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eligible for the relief, and directed the Revenue Divisional Officer to arrange for the immediate disbursement of the relief and that he has also issued instructions to the Revenue Divisional Officer, Namakkal, to visit the village, and form a relief committee with the leading villagers and arrange for food and clothing through public donations."

IV.—ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE HON. SPEAKER *RE* CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

(1) COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES.

MR. SPEAKER :—" I have to announce to the House that the following fourteen Members were duly nominated for the election of fourteen Members of the Madras Legislative Assembly to the *Committee on Estimates* :— 9-0 p.m.

1 Sri A. Ratnam.
2 ,, M. Narayana Kurup.
3 ,, T. C. Narayanan Nambiar.
4 ,, S. Ramalingam.
5 ,, D. Krishnamurthi Gounder.
6 ,, S. Swayamprakasam.
7 ,, R. S. Arumugam.
8 ,, N. Gopala Menon.
9 ,, P. B. K. Raja Chidambaram.
10 ,, V. K. Ramaswami Mudaliar.
11 ,, K. Rajaram.
12 ,, T. Anantha Pai.
13 ,, S. Jayarama Reddiar.
14 ,, Dr. U. Krishna Rao.

" As the number of candidates validly nominated is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, viz., *fourteen*, I hereby declare them to have been duly elected to the Committee on Estimates. The Hon. Finance Minister is a member of the Committee *ex-officio*.

" Under rule 164 of the Madras Assembly Rules, I nominate Dr. U. Krishna Rao to be Chairman of the Committee.

(2) COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

I have to announce to the House that the following fourteen Members were duly nominated for the election of fourteen Members of the Madras Legislative Assembly to the Committee on Public Accounts :—

1 Dr. K. B. Menon.
2 Sri K. P. Gopalan.
3 ,, Kunhi Muhammad Shaffee.